

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PBOR, PFOR, MX

SUBJECT: ECHEVERRIA COMMENTS ON BRACEROS

1. IN A BREAKFAST-PRESS CONFERENCE ON JULY 6, PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA HAD THE FOLLOWING COMMENTS ON THE BRACERO-ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS ISSUE.

2. "MEXICANS SEEK WORK IN THE US AND THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO EMPLOY THEM BECAUSE THEY NEED CHEAPER LABOR THAN THE NORTH AMERICAN WORKER...THERE IS ALSO AN UNEMPLOYMENT PROBLEM IN THE US; THE US UNIONS MUST (ATTEMPT TO HOLD) THE JOB OPPORTUNITIES FOR AMERICAN WORKERS THOUGH (THE UNIONS) KNOW THAT FARMERS IN BOTH SOUTHERN AND NORTHERN US NEED THE MIGRATORY WORKERS..." BUT THE US UNIONS CANNOT FORMALLY, OPENLY, OBVIOUSLY ACCEPT OR APPROVE THE IDEA (OF MEXICAN WORKERS).

3. "...I BELIEVE WE WILL FIND (A SOLUTION) BECAUSE ALL US LIBERAL OPINION IS TROUBLED BY THE TREATMENT GIVEN TO MIGRATORY WORKERS...WE HAVE SETTLED MANY IMPORTANT PROBLEMS WITH THE US, WE MUST ACKNOWLEDGE THAT."

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4. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS ABOUT ALLEGED MISTREATMENT

OF BRACEROS, ECHEVERRIA SAID: "MANY ABUSES OCCUR BECAUSE OF THE LACK OF GUARANTEES AND RULES, BY THE FAILURE OF US UNIONS TO ASSIMILATE (ILLEGALS)...BY US RANCHERS WHO HIRE BRACEROS AND THEN HAVE THEM REMOVED." QUESTION: "HAS THE GOM ESTABLISHED CONSULAR REPRESENTATIVES IN THE DETENTION CENTERS?" ECHEVERRIA: "YES, BUT WHAT THEY SAY TO OUR CONSULS IS THAT (THE BRACEROS) ENTERED ILLEGALLY, AND THEY ENTERED ILLEGALLY BECAUSE THEY WERE ALLOWED TO DO SO. YOU ALL KNOW THAT NOBODY ENTERS A COUNTRY, NOWADAYS, WITHOUT THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE AUTHORITIES. THEY(AUTHORITIES) LET THEM ENTER BECAUSE THEY PAY THEM LESS AND THEN THEY DON'T NEED THEM (BRACEROS) AND PERSECUTE THEM. AND THEY SAY DO NOT DEFEND YOURSELF BECAUSE YOU ENTERED ILLEGALLY."

5. COMMENT: ECHEVERRIA AND THE GOM HOLD STUBBORNLY TO THE VIEW THAT MEXICAN WORKERS (ILLEGALS) IN THE US FILL A NEED NOT MET BY US WORKERS. THEY RATIONALIZE IN VARIOUS WAYS, AS ABOVE, THE OPPOSITION OF US UNIONS TO A NEW BRACERO PROGRAM AND GENERALLY IGNORE CHICANO VIEWS.

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